

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE TWENTIETH
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NORTH
CAROLINA BAR ASSOCIATION.
HELD AT HARBOR ISLAND AUDITORIUM
WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH, NORTH
CAROLINA JUNE 25, 26, 27, 1918**

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□
EDITED BY
THOMAS W. DAVIS, SECRETARY
(OF THE WILMINGTON BAR)
ASSISTANTS
WILLIAM L. SMITH :: LEONORA MILLS

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1918

STAMPED

PROGRAM NORTH CAROLINA BAR ASSOCIATION

TUESDAY, JUNE 25TH

8:15 p. m.—Association convenes—The President, Mr. A. W. McLean, of the Lumberton Bar, presiding.

Address of Welcome—By Mr. G. V. Cowper, of the Kinston Bar.

Response—By Mr. T. L. Caudle, of the Wadesboro Bar.

President's Address—By Mr. A. W. McLean.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26TH

MORNING SESSION

10:00 A. M.

Historical Address—By Major John W. Graham, of the Hillsboro Bar, on "Some Events in My Life; Some Lawyers I Have Known."
Reports of Committees.

AFTERNOON SESSION

3:00 P. M.

Address—By Hon. R. H. Welch, General Counsel of the Federal Land Bank, Columbia, South Carolina, on "The Relation of the Bar to the Success of the Federal Farm Loan System in the Third Federal Land District."

EVENING SESSION

8:30 P. M.

Address—By Monsieur Frederic Allain, of Paris, Counsellor to the French High Commission.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27TH

10:00 A. M.

Address—By Hon. W. J. Adams, of the Carthage Bar.

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The Twentieth Annual Meeting of the NORTH CAROLINA BAR ASSOCIATION convened at Harbor Island Auditorium, Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina, at 8:15 p. m. on Tuesday, June 25, 1918.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. A. W. McLean.

The President: The Twentieth Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Bar Association will now come to order. The address of welcome will be delivered by Mr. G. V. Cowper, of the Kinston Bar. (Applause.)

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

Mr. Cowper said:

We meet amid perilous times. The world trembles in the balance tested by war, destruction, and death. We have but to strain our ears to seem to hear the tramp of soldiers, the roar of cannon, and the cry of anguish from the battle-fields of France. We have but to stretch our eyes to see, though through a glass darkly, ruined temples and decrepit women and children. In the past few days the havoc has been brought to our very door, as we have read in bold headlines of the destruction of American lives and American property by submarines along our own Atlantic coast. Never before, as today, in the recollection of any living man, has there been enacted

upon the world's stage such dramatic and vivid illustration of the poet's definition of war:

"With a fierce and lavish hand,
Scattering nations' wealth like sand,
Pouring nations' blood like water
In imperial seas of slaughter."

Certain it is that the test of welcome to organization, institution, or individual at this critical hour proceeds from a different basis and is measured by a changed standard from that which applied four years ago. Whether or not our fellow-men shall be glad that we gather together tonight depends upon a point of view radically unlike that which would have determined the matter a year ago—for momentous things have happened in the short space of a year.

The one supreme question, the answer to which proclaims us welcome guests or undesirable citizens, is: "How have we met the grave responsibilities and duties of these trying days, when the mighty contest is on between autocracy and freedom, between righteousness and wickedness?"

With the searchlight of this inquiry pitilessly turned upon the corporate body of the Bar of North Carolina, it makes reply with neither "frantic boast" nor "foolish word," and yet, it stands unafraid and answers for itself in a record of deeds rather than a labyrinth of words. Looking back upon the great events of history, we find of a truth that those revolutions which have stirred the world and uplifted mankind have usually been led by members of the legal profession. It was a lawyer who wrote Magna Charta and the American Declaration of Independence. Likewise, it is a lawyer by profession and learning, if not by practice, who today interprets for the world the meaning of this conflict which is to set men everywhere free. This is not without reason. Embued with the deep-seated meaning of the sacredness of government and the cost in struggle and blood, of law and order, it is no wonder that the lawyer is found where the battle rages thickest in defense of the great fundamental principles upon which rests the permanency of our civilization.

As it was in the past, it is now, and shall be in the years to come.

Let us take a brief account. I assert without fear of contradiction, that a larger per cent of our members have given up their labors at home and entered this titanic contest of battle than of any other civil profession, trade, or occupation. They are either in France or in training camps. Go from county to county and read the record. In my own county, out of seventeen members of the local Bar, six are now engaged in service—and my county is no exception. In the majority of cases they have not waited to be drafted. They render free and voluntary homage to the nation. Our ranks at home are perceptibly thinned, but the subtraction adds luster to our traditions, and strength to the cause of the world's safety.

But the question is not yet answered. It is not enough to report those of our ranks who are facing death in trench and air, as well as on ocean. How have those who have remained at home met the issue? Seldom, indeed, did they answer to the call of clients during the past months of December, January, and February. Under the leadership of three hundred of our members, the vast host of lawyers in North Carolina, with their brethren in other States, were, during those months, day and night aiding and advising prospective soldiers; in giving to the Government information it then desired in order to form an army to meet the enemy of civilization and international law. A hundred other lawyers in the State became the unpaid agents of the Government in perfecting appeals from local to district boards, in order to see that justice was done between class and class and man and man, while still others filled such difficult tasks as food and fuel administrators, and leaders of Bond, Stamp, Red Cross, and Y. M. C. A. drives and other war activities. The debates of the courtroom have, to a large extent, given way and taken second place, while the voice of the lawyer all over the State is heard in city, hamlet, and country school, preaching patriotism and denouncing the slightest trace of treachery. These are finer things than offerings in dollars and cents, though they have

meant a willing sacrifice of thousands of dollars. If, however, you measure the lawyer's loyalty by gifts to Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. and subscriptions to Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps, the same splendid record is written. The rights and property of every soldier in this State are secure during his absence. He knows he has nothing to fear while these things are left in the hands of the Bar of this State; indeed, he doubts not, even though his rights should depend upon his opposing counsel.

In short, we have offered our best—in thought, in word, and in deed.

And thus, Mr. President and gentlemen of the Bar Association, men and women in every community of the State will feel the safer because we meet here to deliberate. They rely upon your wisdom, they believe in your judgment, they glory in your patriotism. I do not welcome you, therefore, primarily to this far-famed Cape Fear section, rich in historic lore, and made memorable by its record in other times, though it is significant and fitting that we meet here. I do not, forsooth, place your hands in the hospitable hands of the City of Wilmington and bid you enjoy the inevitable benefit of a visit to this populous center. It is a happy coincidence that this pleasure will be ours. Neither do I welcome you here to eat, drink, and be merry, where ocean breezes blow and restless waves lull you to sleep as they beat ever and anon upon the shore. These things might rightfully take a large place in your greetings at other times and under different circumstances. They are secondary, but delightful happenings now. I think I represent the thought of a grateful State when I welcome you, not to a place or a condition, but rather I extend to you hearty greetings and a gracious welcome because during the past year you have been weighed in the balances, and you have not been found wanting. In view of the spirit in which those absent and those present have wrought under the stress of a world conflict, it may be truthfully said, "It is good for us to be here."